

IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:
~~a data reading meansunit for reading character data from at least one-two inserted trading card under control of a CPU cards, each trading card storing a set of character data;~~
~~an advancing unit for advancing a game based on the read character data;~~
~~a combining unit for combining at least two sets of character data when a first predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced game;~~
~~a determining unit for determining at least one set of character data of a reward trading card based on the combined character data; and~~
~~a payout meansunit for paying out at least one-the reward trading card under control of the CPU which stores the determine set of character data,~~
~~wherein a set of character data of the at least one reward trading card is determined by combining the read character data, when the prescribed conditions that are satisfied in the game.~~

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the payout meansunit includes writing meansunit for writing the determine set of character dataupdated character data in the at least one reward trading card, the updated character data being based on results of the game.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the set of character data includes capability and attribute values.

6. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein

the payout ~~means~~unit includes printing ~~means~~unit for printing an image of the determined set of character data on a surface of the ~~at least one~~ reward trading card.

7. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:
- three slots into which ~~two or three~~ a plurality of trading cards can be inserted, each trading card storing a set of character data;
- a card reader which reads a set of character data from ~~the~~ at least one inserted trading card;
- an advancing device which advances a game based on the read character data;
- a combining device which combines at least two sets of character data, when a prescribed condition is satisfied in the advanced game;
- a determining device which determines at least one set of character data of a reward trading card; and
- a payout device which pays for paying out a the reward trading card storing the determined set of character data; and
- ~~a controller which executes a predetermined computer program, the controller being connected to the card reader and the card writer,~~
- ~~wherein the controller causes the card reader to read the character data, determines the set of character data of the reward trading card by combining the read character data, and causes the payout device to pay out the reward trading card.~~

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling a gaming machine, comprising steps of:

reading character data from at least one ~~two inserted~~ trading card, each trading card storing a set of character data;

advancing a game based on the read character data;

receiving an instruction of combining the character data, when a first prescribed condition is satisfied in a-the advanced game;

combining the read-at least two sets of character data in response to the instructions;

to determine determining at least one set of updated character data of a reward trading card based on the combined character data; and

writing the set of updated character data to at least one-the reward trading card;

wherein one set of character data is determined by combining two sets of read character data.

10. (Currently Amended) The method for controlling the gaming machine according to claim 9, further comprising steps of:

advancing a game based on the character data; and

changing the character data based on results of the game.

11. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:
three slots into which at least two trading cards can be inserted, each of the trading card storing a set of character data;

a card reader which reads character data from the inserted trading cards;

a payout device for paying out a reward trading card; and

a controller which executes a predetermined computer program, the controller being connected to the card reader and the payout device,

wherein the controller causes the card reader to read the character data, advances a game based on the read character data, combines at least two sets of character data when a first predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced game, determines the set of character data of the reward trading card based on the combined character data by combining the read character data, and causes the payout device to pay out the reward trading card which stores the determined set of character data.

12. (New) The gaming machine according to claim 1, further comprising a changing unit for changing a number of combining set and a number of determining set in response to proceedings of the game.
13. (New) The gaming machine according to claim 1, further comprising a generating unit for generating a set of character data when a second predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced game, wherein the determining unit determines one set of character data of a reward trading card based on the second predetermined condition, and the payout unit pays out the reward trading card storing the determined set of character data.
14. (New) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the combining unit combines the entirety of the read character data, and the determining unit determines the entirety of the rewarded character data based on the combined character data.
15. (New) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the combining unit combines the entirety of the read character data, and the determining unit determines a part of the rewarded character data based on the combined character data.
16. (New) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the combining unit combines a part of the read character data, and the determining unit determines the entirety of the rewarded character data based on the combined character data.
17. (New) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the combining unit combines a part of the read character data, and

the determining unit determines a part of the rewarded character data based on the character data.

18. (New) The gaming machine according to claim 1, further comprising an updating unit for updating the character data based on the results of the game.